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C O N F I D E N T I A L NDJAMENA 001360

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LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS. EUCOM FOR POLAD

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SUBJECT: CHADIAN REBEL OFFENSIVE--EVENING UPDATE

REF: A. N'DJAMENA 1358

[B](#). N'DJAMENA 1356

[C](#). N'DJAMENA 1357

Classified By: Poloff John O'Leary. Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

[1](#). (C) As of 1900 hours local, the French Ambassador reported that the UFDD rebel column which withdrew from Abeche (13,49 N; 20,49 E) this morning, 11/26, was approximately 100 KM northeast of Abeche and that the northern SCUD (RaFD) column was approximately 100 KM west of Biltine, significantly east of Ati where independent sources placed it earlier this afternoon. Both columns have halted for the night, according to French sources.

[2](#). (C) The Chadian National Army (ANT) reportedly is establishing defensive positions 5 to 10 KM outside of N'Djamena. Emboffs noted an increased ANT presence in the city as evening approached, including at least one tank near the presidential palace. Civilian traffic, however, appeared normal for a Sunday evening.

[3](#). (U) The United Nations has declared a "level IV" state of readiness for its operations in Abeche, i.e., the UN is evacuating non-essential personnel. In N'Djamena, the UN has gone to "level III", which is an evacuation of dependents.

[4](#). (U) The French Embassy has told French citizens that the French school will be open tomorrow, 11/27, but warned them to remain vigilant. The American school director has decided to close the school tomorrow. Air France is flying tonight as scheduled, but there are no empty seats.

[5](#). (C) The Embassy held an EAC at 1900 hours local and decide to consolidate staff at the Embassy housing compound and at the chancery. TDY personnel may remain at their hotels if the hotels are designated as French military evacuation pick-up points. The Embassy will open tomorrow with reduced FSN staff. The consular officer issued a warden message tonight, and the EAC will reconvene tomorrow.

[6](#). (C) Comment. Rebel intentions are unclear at this time. They could resume heir westward push toward N'Djamena tomorrow or uesday, or they could turn east and return to thir encampments in Sudan. Current betting is that hey will g east--but no one is putting a lot of money on it.
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